

C. S. MacLennan

Imperialism AND The Unity of the Empire.

A Rectorial Address before the Students
of the University of Aberdeen,
December 18th, 1900.

BY
LORD STRATHCONA & MOUNT ROYAL.

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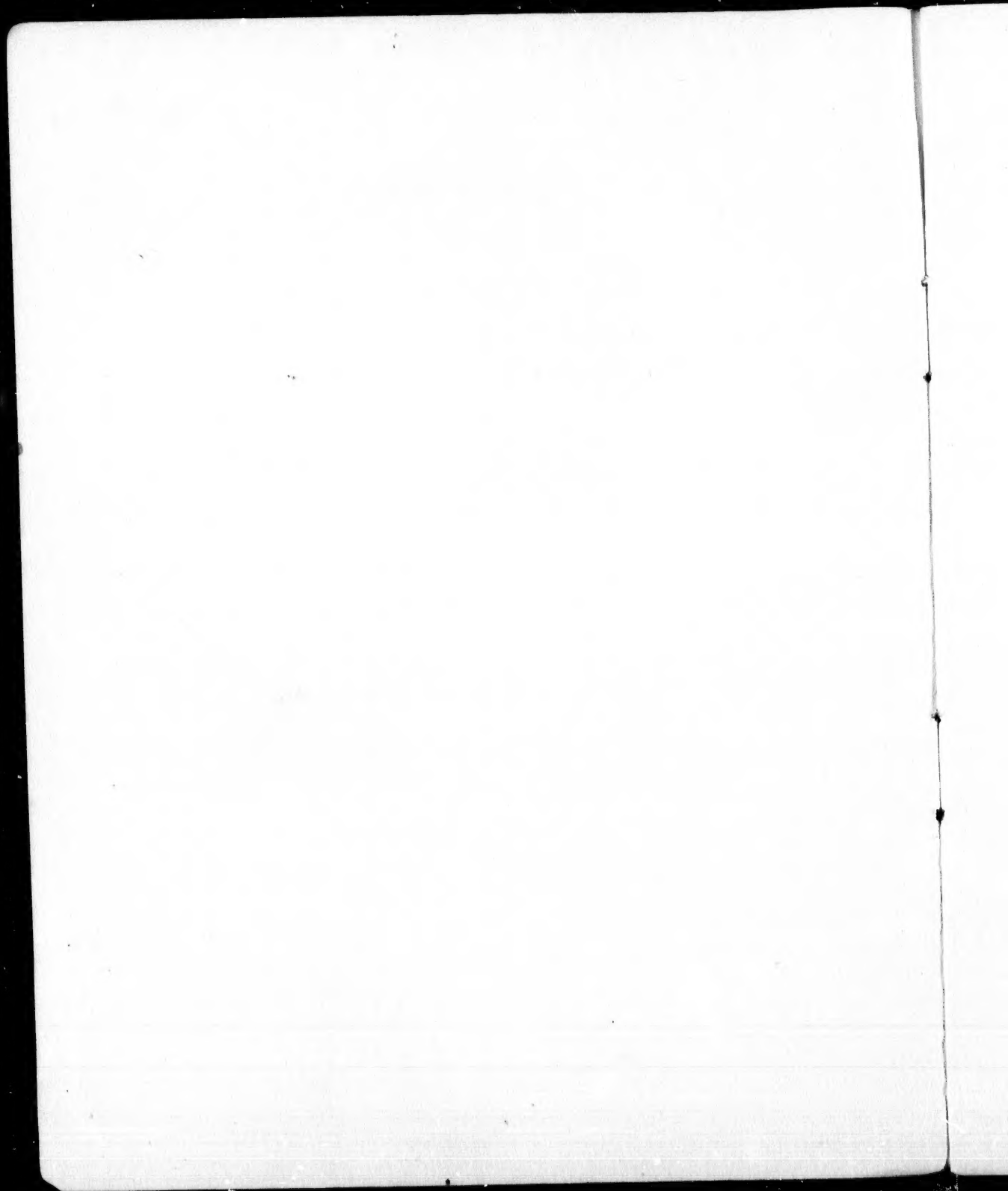
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IN THE first place I must thank my constituents, most warmly, for having placed me in the honourable position which it is my privilege to occupy to-day. When the matter was mentioned to me, last year, I felt some diffidence in allowing my name to be put forward as a candidate. I could not but remember the many distinguished men who had previously held the office of Rector, with so much credit to themselves, and advantage to the University; but, in the end, largely on the understanding that no political significance would attach to it, I accepted the invitation. You will readily understand that, as the representative of Canada in this country, I could not very well identify myself with either of the great parties of our political system of to-day. It was largely owing to this reason that almost at the last moment the promised excitement of a contest, so dear to the hearts of students, resolved itself into what appeared likely to be the tranquillity of an unopposed return. I am afraid that this state of things did not give unalloyed satisfaction within the precincts of the University—a feeling in which I might have shared myself, had I been one of the electorate instead of a candidate. Still, if I remember rightly, the proceedings were not altogether devoid of the liveliness by which even Rectorial elections are usually accompanied; and I believe the citizens of Aberdeen were made aware that something out of the ordinary run of the daily life of the city was taking place. I hope that the students, at any rate, thoroughly enjoyed themselves on the occasion.

In thanking you for the support and consideration extended to me by the students of both sexes, I desire, at the same time, to express my appreciation of the action of Sir Edward Grey. I might not admit it in public, but I might be willing to confess in private, that probably Sir Edward Grey would have made a better Lord Rector, in the interests of the University, than myself. While comparatively a young man, he has had considerable experience of public affairs, and has won the respect and admiration of his fellow-countrymen, as one who may be relied upon to place the welfare of his country before any local or political considerations. It is a fortunate thing for the Empire that we have rising statesmen of his calibre, in whose care its interests are sure to be safe-guarded, and its integrity maintained. I understand that when Sir Edward Grey learned that the contest would not, in any case, be fought upon political lines (so far as I was concerned), he withdrew his name; and as it left the field open to me, I feel under many obligations to him.

There is one other matter to which I must refer before proceeding with my Address. I allude to the death of the late Principal, my old and valued friend Sir William Geddes. He was associated with the University for many years; and his personal character, scholarly and intellectual qualifications, eminently fitted him to fill, with much distinction, the high place which it is no figure of speech to say he adorned. His passing away was a great loss, both to the University and to education generally. We are, however, fortunate in having, as his successor, the Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang, whose attainments, personality, and long experience, form a guarantee in themselves that the University of Aberdeen will continue to maintain the position which has given it a reputation far beyond the limits of our own country.

When it became necessary to consider the choice of a subject

on which to address you, I found myself somewhat embarrassed. I might have spoken on the Ethics of Rectorial Elections, with a reference to famous battles for the Standard; or I might have taken one of the more or less abstruse questions of an academic nature, upon which most of you are far better informed than I am. But, I decided to deal with a matter which is sure to be especially interesting to Scotsmen, both young and old, and in connection with which I have had some little experience. I refer to the growth of Imperialism, and to the efforts that are being made to bring about the consolidation of the Empire. Perhaps I ought to tell you why I have chosen this particular theme. It is because Scotsmen have had a great deal to do with the development of Greater Britain—more perhaps than any other section of the British race; but it might not be wise to say so much to an audience south of the Tweed. By a wise dispensation of Providence, Scotsmen, or at any rate some of them, in the past, for one reason or another, preferred to wander rather than to stay at home. Several explanations of this nomadic weakness—or strength, as the case may be—have been given; but they are generally offered by Englishmen, Irishmen, or Welshmen. However, Scotsmen and their descendants are to be found in every part of the world. It might have been for the good of their own country had our people remained at home; but we may say without egotism, for it is generally admitted, that it has certainly proved to be for the good of the Empire, that they took with them to the rising colonies, in those early days, their education, and their habits of frugality, thrift, and perseverance. They have done much in helping to build up Greater Britain, and to give the flag in which the Cross of St. Andrew occupies a prominent place, the importance it possesses to-day in the eyes of the world. I venture to believe also, that the present generation, and the rising generation, of Scotsmen, and of their fellow British-subjects, will fully recognise and appreciate the grand heritage which is

being handed down to them; and that they will be as proud of it as we are ourselves, and show themselves equal, in every way, to the responsibilities which its possession entails. These are some of the reasons which lead me to think that I could not have fixed upon any more attractive text for my address to the students of the University of Aberdeen.

It is casting no aspersion on the memory of those who have gone before us to state that in acquiring for Great Britain so much of the earth's surface, they apparently had little or no idea of what they would do with it, or how it was likely to affect the British Empire of the future. It was a custom in those days, and one in which all peoples alike shared, more or less, to seize anything that happened to be within their reach—if it belonged to an enemy, or if its possession was likely to afford an enemy any satisfaction. This practice not only prevailed collectively among nations, but among individuals as well, if our Border history is to be relied upon. Little or nothing was attempted for many years to colonise the territories that were acquired. On the other hand, much was certainly done to hamper and restrict their development, in the interests of the trade and commerce of the United Kingdom—their existence being regarded largely as for its benefit and profit. This, and other mistakes, led to disastrous results, which might have been fatal to the progress of any other nation than our own.

An endeavour was made, in later years, to promote the export trade of the Colonies, by the granting of preferential fiscal treatment in the United Kingdom; but as the result of the agitation which led to the reform of the Corn Laws, that privilege was partially withdrawn, and subsequently was altogether abolished. Whether the policy, so far as it concerned the rest of the Empire, was for the best or not, I will not argue at the moment, neither is it the proper occasion for doing so; but it had the effect of destroying the family commercial relations that existed, and of

placing our kith and kin very much in the same position as foreigners as regards the interchange of trade. It might be interesting to endeavour to arrive at some conclusion as to what the state of Canada and the Colonies would have been to-day, had there been, during all these years, a closer commercial union between the different parts of the Empire. In my opinion it would not be difficult to show that the expansion of their commerce would undoubtedly have led to the more rapid development of their immense natural resources; and that their population and wealth might easily have been greater, in more favourable circumstances, than they are at the present time.

It is often said that fifty or sixty years ago the Colonies were not popular, and that there was a feeling in existence that they were likely to be a source of weakness rather than of strength. Their exact position and limits were not always well-known in official circles, if the stories handed down to us are true; and, besides, they gave rise under the old system of administration, to a great many troublesome questions, which did not make life happier for Ministers and their subordinates. The concession of responsible government was not regarded in many quarters as likely to bring about a closer union. The Colonies were still daughters in their mother's house, although mistresses of their own. This local autonomy was intended, if rumour be true, as the beginning of a state of things that might lead to their establishments becoming entirely separate; and the feeling prevailed, it seems, that while their relationship and intercourse would, under the new order of things, be of a most friendly character, there would be no other closer connection. Some authorities contend that these steps were taken in order to prevent the possibility of the Colonies becoming a drain upon the United Kingdom—either in blood or in treasure. Imperialism was not yet!

Happily, however, these measures, if they were conceived in any spirit of that nature, had an altogether different effect to

that which was anticipated; and the grant of responsible government has turned out to be the best thing that could have happened, both for Great Britain and for Greater Britain. The Colonists were thrown upon their own resources, and they became more independent and self-reliant. They commenced to work out their own salvation, and to develop the great wealth with which they were endowed. The question of the encouragement of immigration became of importance. The same remark applies to the construction of Railways, Waterways, and Telegraphs, and to the provision of Harbours and Docks. And it is gratifying to know that these descendants of the British race have retained their affection for the country from which they sprung; and that they have been imbued from the first with that feeling of Imperialism which, continuing from generation to generation, has had such magnificent results.

I am inclined to believe that the growth of Imperialism, in its true sense, and in its earlier stages, commenced in the Colonies, and that it dates from the time when they received the grant of responsible government. In British North America, the desire to promote closer and preferential trade relations between the different Provinces at once became a leading question. The proposal was not, in the first place, encouraged by the Imperial authorities; but, owing to the pertinacity of the Colonists, the principle was eventually conceded, and they were given the power to treat one another as members of the same family instead of as strangers. The concession did not bring about any immediate result. At the same time it undoubtedly was the germ from which the Dominion of Canada resulted in 1867; and this union of the provinces of British North America, which is now complete, with the exception of Newfoundland may be regarded as the foundation-stone of that greater Federation, now in course of construction, which we hope may, in some form or another, be brought into being long

antecedent to the period known as the dim and distant future.

The example of Canada attracted attention in the other parts of the Empire. In Australia, for instance, the question of the trade relations between the different Colonies became the subject of discussion. After a good deal of negotiation with the Imperial Government, legislation was passed permitting preferential arrangements in 1873. When the Australians had obtained the acceptance of the principle for which they were contending, they also remained satisfied for the moment, and nothing more was done. But it must be regarded again as the germ that subsequently led to the Federation of Australia, which is to be brought into practical effect on the 1st of January next.

The inauguration of the Dominion of Canada was allowed to take place, without any great rejoicings or jubilation, probably because the significance of the movement was not then thoroughly grasped. We are all glad, however, to see the greater attention which the union of Australia has attracted, and to know that the occasion is to be marked as one of the highest moment. The visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to open the first Parliament of the Commonwealth in May next, is a tribute to the importance which is attached to the birth of United Australia by Her Majesty, by Parliament, and by the other parts of the Empire. I believe that the federation will be as successful as that of the different provinces of Canada; that it is another of the steps in the growth of Imperialism; and that it will have the greatest possible effect upon the still wider movement which is ever in our minds—perhaps in an indefinite shape at present—having for its object the consolidation of the Empire. That, in the near future, as soon as the memory of recent events becomes less acute, there will be a similar movement for Federation in South Africa does not seem to admit of a doubt.

An Imperial Union will then be within nearer reach than at present. When that desirable consummation is accomplished it will mean a new era of peace and prosperity for the British Empire, and perhaps for the world.

Notwithstanding what is sometimes said of us in other countries, I do not think we are an aggressive people. Most of the territory we possess was acquired in times when other countries were not ready, or able, to acquire and to hold it. The justification of our policy, from the points of view of humanity and civilisation is shown by a comparison of the results of our efforts with those of other nations which now number, or have numbered in the past, considerable territories among their possessions, and by the position of our self-governing Colonies—or rather let us call them the self-governing Provinces of the British Empire. We have, in Canada, a federation of all but one of the provinces of British North America. The Australian Colonies are shortly to begin their united career. South Africa is in the throes of trouble at the present time, but out of it good is likely to come. In Canada and in these Colonies, and in the Crown Colonies, there is probably a population of from twelve to fourteen millions of white people—nearly half of them being in Canada—and they are increasing in a greater proportion than the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. The import trade of Greater Britain is equal to nearly one-half of the imports of the United Kingdom, and its exports are developing at a very rapid rate. In every part of the Empire the “Open Door” is much in evidence.

We do not always sufficiently appreciate the struggles made by the Colonies to bring themselves to the position they occupy to-day. Owing to their large areas, and to the numerical weakness of their populations, especially in the early days of their existence, they had to find the means for opening up their resources. As already mentioned, this meant the construction of roads, of railways, of telegraphs, of water-ways, and many public

works, and the subsidising of steamship and cable communication. In view of local conditions, these important undertakings were not initiated by individuals or by companies, as in older settled and more populated countries. The people had to do the work themselves, or, at any rate, to find the money. They had to tax themselves heavily to raise the necessary revenue, and it had to take the form of indirect taxation, owing to the difficulty of collecting anything in the nature of direct taxation. Some may argue, from economic considerations, that this was a mistake, but in any case, it is a mistake which has been condoned by most of the countries of the world even in more favourable circumstances. Personally, when it comes to a question of taxation, I do not see that it matters very much whether it is taken out of one pocket or the other. We may talk as much as we like about this or that method of taxation, but we have to find the money that is required. The next step was to borrow money on the public credit—that is, upon their revenue-producing powers. In the earlier stages this had to be done at high rates of interest, but now the credit of the Colonies is so good—much better, indeed, than that of many foreign countries—that they can borrow within a fraction of the rate of interest at which the United Kingdom itself can obtain money; and quite recently their stocks have been raised to the dignity and status of securities in which Trustees may invest. Colonial borrowing is criticised from time to time, but generally by people who do not understand the situation. There is no doubt that the security offered is considered to be good, or the money would not be lent; and, in justification of this statement, it may be added that the cautious Scotsmen have always invested largely in such loans. Most of the money is spent upon reproductive works, which form, in themselves, in addition to the public revenues, the security for the debts. Not only do they afford a safe investment for British Capital, but most of the materials required for public works have

in the past, been bought in the Mother Country—which therefore gets a double benefit from the borrowings. Canada has not borrowed so much as the other Colonies, because the Railways in the Dominion, with one exception, are owned by Companies, and not by the people. Indeed Canada has gone upon the principle of subsidising railways [land grants forming a considerable portion of the aid given], rather than of assuming a proprietary interest in the lines; but the indirect results upon the development of the country have probably been as great, while the national obligations are considerably lower.

So far, in the course of my remarks, I have dealt largely, and, from force of circumstances, in a superficial manner, with some of the events which have marked the growth of Imperialism in the outlying parts of the Empire. It is not my wish to under-rate, in any way, the growth of the Imperial idea in the United Kingdom. I am inclined to maintain, however, that it has been brought about chiefly by the perseverance and pertinacity of our fellow-subjects in the Colonies; and that its growth has been slower here than there, although it cannot be doubted that in the Mother-land, the Imperial sentiment is the dominant feature of the moment, and, to use an Americanism, has apparently come to stay.

In my judgment the better knowledge which now prevails in the United Kingdom, of Canada and the Colonies is largely owing to the efforts of the Colonial representatives during the last twenty or thirty years. Those who come from Greater Britain are not yet altogether satisfied that as much is known about them as ought to be the case; but they are compelled to recognise the immense progress made in comparatively recent times. It has been a part of the duties of these representatives to preach the gospel of the Colonies for various reasons. One has been with the object of attracting immigration, which is, and must be, for many years to come, foremost among

the many important questions requiring the consideration of Colonial statesmen. I only wish it had received greater attention in times past, in official circles, in this country. Then, again, they have done their utmost to make the various Colonial products better known in the English—or perhaps I had better say in the British markets; and the fact that Canada and the Colonies have spent millions and millions of money in the purchase of materials and stores for public works, has helped to bring home to manufacturers, to workmen, and to shippers the existence and importance of the outlying parts of the Empire. They have acted for their governments in connection with the borrowing of money, and in consequence a large and increasing number of people are materially interested in Greater Britain, because they occupy the position of lenders. We like to think that, when investing in these bonds and stocks, not from any sentimental point of view, but because they think it good business, our creditors are likely to retain something more than a friendly interest in the development of the Colonies, and that they naturally do all they can to promote their welfare.

Probably the first practical object-lesson the public received of the potentialities of Canada and the Colonies, and the position they would probably occupy, as producers of many of the articles which Great Britain imports, and consumers of the products of the United Kingdom, was derived from the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886. That Exhibition caused much surprise amongst those who thought they knew a good deal of Greater Britain; and I believe that it awakened an interest in Colonial development and enterprise, in this country, which had not been apparent to the same extent before. Nothing like it has since been seen in London; and certainly, there is no comparison between the Colonial exhibits in South Kensington in 1886 and those at the recent Paris Exhibition. I am glad to notice, however, that Canada and many of the Colonies are making arrangements for representa-

tive displays at Glasgow next year ; and I am sure that it will afford much satisfaction and pleasure to the people of Scotland.

The Colonial and Indian Exhibition was followed by a gathering which will be historical, as the first occasion on which what may be termed an informal Parliament of the British Empire met in London. I refer to the Colonial Conference of 1887. It was summoned by the late Hon. Edward Stanhope, then Secretary of State, and presided over by his successor Lord Knutsford. It was attended by leading statesmen from every part of the Empire, and the questions discussed were of the first importance. Some have been disposed of, and others are still not yet settled ; but it is impossible to over-rate the significance of the event, as it brought into prominence the idea of an Imperial Council, which some regard as likely to be the next step towards Imperial unity. The Conference called together by the Government of Canada in 1894, was equally as remarkable in its way. All the Australasian Colonies were represented, as well as Cape Colony and Natal, and the Earl of Jersey watched the proceedings on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. Many subjects of great moment from an Imperial standpoint were under consideration ; and several important developments closely connected with Imperial unity will be regarded by the historian as having been brought within the region of practical affairs by the Ottawa Conference.

Another step in the growth of Imperialism in the United Kingdom was the celebration of the sixty years of Her Majesty's reign in 1897, when representatives from Greater Britain were invited to London. The Colonial Premiers were present, and also representative contingents of the Colonial military forces, of which we have heard a good deal more since. The outburst of enthusiasm which the participation of Greater Britain in that memorable event created will not readily be forgotten. It seemed to bring the subjects of Her Majesty in, and outside, the United

Kingdom closer together than they had ever been before. The occasion was also marked by a conference between the delegates of the Self-governing Colonies and Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State, who has done so much to promote the consolidation of the Empire.

It will thus be seen that on three occasions within the last thirteen or fourteen years has an informal Imperial Parliament, or Council, been called together. There have been other interesting events in recent years, affecting both the Colonies and the Mother-land, which have not, perhaps, attracted so much attention as those already mentioned, but are none the less striking, and of moment. There is, for instance, the contribution of Australasia to the Navy—that is, towards the cost of maintaining a special Australasian Squadron. This was practically the outcome of the Conference of 1887. Another matter of Imperial interest has been the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Canadian people have willingly assumed a burden of about a million sterling a year, in order to open up their Western Country, to connect the Atlantic with the Pacific, and to provide a new Imperial highway affording an alternative route to Australasia, to China and Japan, India, and to the East generally. The preferential trade policy of Canada also deserves mention. It may be said to be the outcome of the abrogation of the Belgian and German Treaties, which in effect prevented the Colonies granting preferential treatment to Great Britain. Those conventions, like many other Treaties, were entered into without the Colonies being consulted; but it was a long time before public opinion became sufficiently strong to induce the Government to terminate them. It came about at last, in 1896; and was precipitated by the offer of preferential treatment to British imports by the Dominion. The policy could not, however, be carried out effectually so long as the Treaties remained in operation, and happily they were, in consequence,

brought to a close some two or three years ago. British imports now receive a preference of 33½ per cent. off the custom duties, as compared with similar articles from other countries. It has led to an increased import trade from the United Kingdom, and to an increase in the exports to Great Britain. No direct reciprocity has been offered and none has been asked for. If rumour be true, it is not unlikely that a somewhat similar preference may be shown by Australia to British products, when the new Constitution gets into working order; and the question is said to be under consideration in New Zealand. One of the leading statesmen of South Africa—I refer to Mr. Cecil Rhodes—is also in favour of the policy. You will see, therefore, that, perhaps unconsciously, we are making rapid advances towards a closer union between the different parts of the Empire, for commercial purposes.

There are one or two other matters to which a brief allusion may be made as bearing on the question. In late years considerable progress has been made, both by the Mother Country and by the Colonies, in improving means of inter-communication. This applies not only to Australasia and the Cape, and to Canada, but more recently still to the West Indies. Too much importance cannot be attached to this matter, if we are to continue to say that the seas do not divide us but form a bond of union. It is the most effective means of promoting Imperial trade, and of meeting the foreign competition which is now growing stronger and stronger. The principle is one which our foreign competitors fully recognise, notably Germany, as their immense subsidies to steamers plying to Australasia and other parts of the world clearly shows.

Within the last few weeks, the construction of the Pacific cable, connecting Canada and Australasia, has been agreed upon, and the contract will very shortly be signed. It will be operated jointly by certain of the Australasian Colonies, Canada, and the United Kingdom, and it is impossible to

over-rate the importance or the value of this truly Imperial work. The Pacific Ocean has not been much exploited up to the present time. There are only two regular lines of steamers crossing it under the British flag. Those are the Canadian Pacific Railway Company's Steamers to Japan and China, subsidised by the Canadian and by the Imperial Governments; and the Australian Line, subsidised by Canada and some of the Australasian Colonies, between Vancouver, New Zealand, Sydney, and Melbourne. There seems a bright prospect for the increase of trade, in the future, by way of the Pacific Ocean; and the possession of a British cable, touching nowhere but on British territory, should do much to place it largely in the control of Great Britain and of her Colonies.

Mention must be made also of the Imperial Penny Post. It was discussed for many years before being adopted, and everybody is surprised now, after the event, that so desirable a change in our arrangements was not brought into operation before. Perhaps it is of even greater sentimental importance than of practical advantage; but it does give the people of the different parts of the Empire an opportunity of communicating with each other at the cheapest rate possible, and is an aid, also, in the promotion of commercial intercourse.

Another and perhaps the most important instance of the growth of Imperialism, I have left to the last. At any time within the last two or three decades, and even earlier, when the Mother Country seemed likely to be embroiled in difficulty, there has been an intense desire in Canada and in the Colonies to be allowed to take their share in the burdens of Empire. We all remember how the Australians and Canadians fought with the other soldiers of the Queen in the Sudan; and the war in South Africa is too recent to need any special reference. It is sufficient to say that the people of the Colonies are proud of the Empire, and as jealous of its interests as their fellow-subjects at home. Events have proved that they are ready to sacrifice their lives, and to give their

resources, for the maintenance of British interests. I venture to think that the troops of the Colonies have done good service, although no more than their duty, or more than their brothers-in-arms, as they would be the first to admit; and I believe that one of the results of the war will be to bring much nearer the consolidation and unity of the Empire.

Upon the whole, therefore, we have reason to congratulate ourselves upon the position of Imperialism, both in the Colonies and in the United Kingdom, at the present time. All movements of the kind are naturally slow. Great changes spring from small beginnings, and are gradual in their development, although their maturity, or partial maturity, may come upon us somewhat suddenly. Whatever opinion you may entertain on the subject of my address, I make one claim upon your consideration—I have not given you any of the voluminous statistics, which might have been appropriate on such an occasion, to illustrate my statements, and to show the progress that has been made, especially, by the Colonies, in the last few decades. I prefer to take it for granted that to an audience like that which I am addressing, figures would be wearisome, and are besides quite unnecessary. And I am not at all sure that there is such an universal faith in statistics as those who compile them like to believe. You know the old story that there are three kinds of lies—lies, other lies, and statistics. Happily, there is no need nowadays for anything in the shape of columns of imposing figures to show the extent of the British Empire, the advance it has made in recent years, and the important position the Colonies now occupy, both individually, and as parts of the Empire. It is only necessary to look at the red colouring on an ordinary map of the world. The greatest tribute I ever heard to the extent of British influence and British commerce was paid by an American, who, after returning from a trip round the world, said, that the thing which struck him most in the course of his travels was that at all

the ports the ship entered the British flag was either flying on the land, or on the vessels in the harbours. Those are not, perhaps his exact words, which were somewhat stronger, but they represent what he meant to convey.

This is all very well so far as it goes. We know what the Empire is. We know that it consists of a galaxy of nations, all subject to one Sovereign, and proud of one flag; and yet not bound so closely together, in regard to matters of a practical nature, as they are in sentiment and loyalty. The great question we have to consider is: what of the future? We have glanced, rather hurriedly perhaps, at some of the milestones along the road which has led to the cross-roads we are now facing. And we have to consider which of them must be taken. Shall it be the one which points to the maintenance of the existing order of things, or the other which will lead to closer unity for Imperial purposes, for commercial purposes, and for defence? There seems to be a general feeling in favour of the latter, which will assure the different parts of the Empire full liberty of self-government, while giving them a voice in Imperial policy, the desire for which is becoming stronger every year. There are some who think that the solution of the problem is to be found in the representation of Canada and the Colonies in the Imperial Parliament. I am not one of those who share that view, at any rate until a truly Imperial Parliament to deal with Imperial affairs can be established. As at present constituted, Parliament is occupied largely with local affairs, of little or no Imperial significance, important though they may be in themselves; and in these circumstances it is not clear to me where the usefulness of Colonial members in either House would be apparent. In times to come it is within the bounds of possibility that there may be local Parliaments to deal with local affairs in England, Scotland, and Ireland; and we may also then have a Parliament

with representatives from the different parts of the Empire, which will be Imperial in name, and in its work. But even on such a basis, the Empire is so vast in its area, and so varied in its resources and in its interests, that the solution for which we are seeking will be surrounded by many difficulties; and he would be a bold man who would attempt to frame a constitution which would satisfactorily meet the requirements of the situation.

We are approaching a period when all parts of the Empire will want to have a voice in Imperial foreign policy, and in other subjects affecting the well-being of the community in general. This is not unnatural, and there can be no true consolidation until it is brought about. How it is to be done I am not prepared to say. I hope I have the proverbial caution of the Scotch too well developed to rush in where angels fear to tread. That some way must be found of meeting the aspirations of the Colonies does not, however, admit of doubt. I have made some reference to the question of an Imperial Parliament. That may be the ultimate solution, or it may not. But, in the meantime, the formation of an Imperial Council, in conjunction with the Colonial Office, consisting of representatives of Her Majesty's Government, and of Canada and the Colonies, has been mentioned as a preliminary step, even if the Council were only consultative at the commencement.

Then there is the question of Imperial Defence. It is very much the fashion to complain that the Colonies do not contribute to the expenses of the Army and Navy, although the services exist for Imperial purposes. There may be something in the contention, but it is really only half a truth. They do not perhaps, except in the case of Australasia, make any direct contribution, but they have been piling up debts, for which they alone are responsible, for works and developments of Imperial as well as of local utility and importance. Their railways, telegraphs, and harbours, subsidies for steam and cable communication, expenses for local

defences, and Militia establishments, all come under this heading. In Canada, the construction of the Intercolonial and Canadian Pacific Railways, as already stated, entails an annual charge upon the country of over a million sterling. These facts should be borne in mind in considering the matter. I do not mean to say that the Colonies ought not to pay towards the cost of the Army and the Navy. No such proposal has yet been made to them; but I am sure that, if put forward, it will be taken into serious consideration. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the proposition is only a part of a far larger subject, and really affects the solution of the whole problem of Imperial unity and representation. In the meantime, much more may be done than has so far been accomplished in the matter of defence—as viewed from the Imperial standpoint. And I have no doubt that something will be attempted in connection with the military reorganisation, which is said to be under consideration. There seems no reason why there should not be greater cohesion between the military forces in the Colonies, and those at home. They certainly ought to form parts of the machinery on which the Empire could implicitly rely in times of trouble and difficulty. As to the Navy, much more co-operation is also possible. Up to the present time, or at any rate until quite recently, the large seafaring populations in the United Kingdom and in the Colonies have not been utilised to any appreciable extent for the formation of a trained naval reserve. A beginning has been made in Newfoundland, and it may be extended. Speaking of my own country, no better material could be found than among the 70,000 hardy sailors and fishermen who inhabit the long coast lines of the Dominion.

There is one aspect of this branch of the subject which seems to deserve consideration. No one will deny that even the connection—more sentimental, perhaps, than practical—that has existed so far has been good for the different parts of the Empire. It is not easy to imagine what would have been the condition of

the Colonies to-day had they drifted away from the United Kingdom, although the old truism about blood being thicker than water would doubtless have proved right in that case. But would the position of the United Kingdom have been the same as it is now? We all know the part our fleet has played in the past, and the important factor it has proved, in the building up of the Empire. It is regarded as our great protection and safeguard now; but with the disappearance of the grand old wooden walls our ships are entirely dependent upon coal and strategic positions. And is it not the fact that the leading coal supplies of the world outside Europe and the United States are found in the Colonies? Without the advantages of these deposits, especially in times of war, the protection of British commerce, or what remained of it, would give rise to very serious problems, apart altogether from the absolute necessity of the harbours and docks which Canada and the Colonies have provided.

That steps could, and perhaps should, be taken to bring the different parts of the Empire in closer touch with each other commercially I fully believe. Personally, I do not think that an arrangement of the kind is either impossible or very difficult to accomplish, or that it need necessarily be antagonistic to the principles of Free Trade. The time may be not yet, but I feel sure it will come, when Canada will trade with Australasia, with South Africa, and with the United Kingdom, on different terms than at present—when their commercial relations will be placed on a more friendly, or, shall I say, on a family, footing. What the United Kingdom looks for is a predominance in the markets of the Empire. What the Colonies desire is the market of the Mother Country and of Greater Britain for their products, which they hope to see favourably regarded—all other things, such as price and quality, being equal. As to the form such an arrangement will take it is not easy to forecast, but it is certain that, and perhaps before very long, we shall have to pay greater

attention to the development of Imperial trade. This will be the case, especially, if our position in outside markets is not maintained, if the doctrine of the "Open Door" is not realised, and if we should have to meet, to a greater extent than at present—a contingency which is not unlikely—the competition of other countries in neutral markets, and in markets we have hitherto regarded as more or less under our control. Such a policy cannot fail to be beneficial to the Empire, and I cannot see any international reasons to prevent our regarding from a more favourable point of view our internal trade, as distinct from the external trade, or, let me say, our domestic trade as distinct from our foreign trade.

I have ventured to address the students on these topics to-day, because I think they are among the most important that can engage the attention of thoughtful men and women. It is by them, and by their contemporaries, that the problems to which I have alluded will perhaps have to be settled. Whether the education of the present day is the best fitted to raise a governing and resourceful people, is a subject upon which some doubt has recently been expressed. I look upon education, not so much from its intrinsic value, as from its general effect upon the minds of the people, and as tending to bring about a higher form of intelligence and a greater capacity for deliberation and judgment; but, at the same time, I am strongly in favour of its standard being modelled to meet modern requirements. If what has been accomplished so far was done in spite of the apathy with which Imperialism was for a long time regarded, what may we not hope from the fact that it is now becoming, as I have already mentioned, the dominant feature of our political life, both at home and in the Colonies? I must confess I do not like the word "Colonies," which I have used so often; but the difficulty is to find another word to describe them. It signifies a position of dependence and tutelage, which by no means represents the condition of the

Canada, the Australasia, and the South Africa of to-day. They are rather partners—not yet predominant partners—in the great alliance or combination known as the British Empire. The greater attention which is now being devoted to Canada and the Colonies in our schools and colleges must have beneficial results; but I should like to see even more time devoted to the study of the history, geography, and resources of Greater Britain. The apathy of the past is no doubt to be attributed largely to the lack of knowledge of the subject that prevailed; and this is not surprising when one remembers the text books in use fifty or sixty years ago, and even within a more recent period. In all our educational institutions, the present position of the Empire, and the relations of its different component parts, ought in my judgment to receive more prominence than at present. If those to whom this magnificent heritage is to be handed down are impressed with its importance, and its potentialities, it will make the solution of the questions we have been discussing far easier when the proper time comes; and it is as well to remember, in this connection, that they are closely associated with the future existence of the Empire.

And now I must bring my address to a close. My remarks have been discursive, but the subject is a large one to deal with in the short time at my disposal. The object I had in view was to place before you some material for reflection. I have tried to indicate some of the steps in the development of Imperialism, and also to point out the course which affairs are taking in the direction of the closer unity of the Empire. Although having spent over sixty years of my life in Canada, and entitled to call myself a Canadian, I am also a Scotsman, proud of my country, and of the part my countrymen have taken, in conjunction with our fellow-subjects in England, Wales, and Ireland, in the development of Greater Britain. Perhaps this explains also why I am no believer in pessimism of which we hear over much at times. It is enthusiasm

or optimism—there is not much difference in the meaning of the terms—that alone will carry us onward. We must retain that confidence in ourselves, both in our individual capacities and collectively as a nation, which has always been a distinguishing characteristic of our race; and we need then have no fears such as are sometimes expressed for the future. This leads me to express, in conclusion, my own conviction that our children, and their children, will be fully alive to the responsibilities which they are to inherit, that, under their auspices, the different parts of the Empire will be brought closer together than they are now, and that they will be equally as keen as their forbears in extending its influence for the good of humanity and in the interests of peace and civilisation.

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